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Innovative ag efforts***From coast to coast programs help promote role of farmers and ranchers*****Compiled by Kindra Gordon**

A corn campaign is currently underway in Washington, D.C. The program is designed to help reach policymakers in our nation's capital learn about the U.S. family farmers who produce corn, our nation's top crop. The campaign is part of the Corn Farmers Coalition program that debuted in early June at Union Station and will run until Congress recesses in August.

The publicity campaign will put prominent facts about family farmers in Capital Hill publications, radio, frequently used websites, and the Metro and Reagan National Airport.

"Even in the 21st Century, corn farming remains a family operation," says Kansas Corn Commission Chairman Mike Brzon, a farmer from Courtland, Kan. "In many cases, such as mine, this vocation goes back multiple generations. The family farmer growing corn for a hungry world isn't a myth, but a critical economic engine for our country and it's important that policymakers and influencers realize this."

Corn farmers from 14 states and the National Corn Growers Association are supporting the Corn Farmers Coalition program to introduce a foundation of facts seen as essential to decision making, rather than directly influencing legislation and regulation. This is the third year for the campaign in D.C.

"Once again, we're putting a face on today's family farmers to showcase the productivity and environmental advances being made in the industry and to provide factual information on how innovative and high-tech corn farmers have become," says Brzon.

"Last year, we saw a good response to our positive and proactive efforts, and this year we have many new people inside the Beltway to

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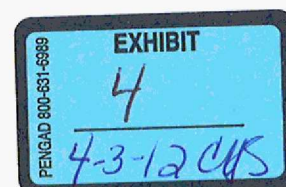
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educate," adds NCGA President Bart Schott, a grower in North Dakota. "As urban and suburban America gets further removed from the agricultural roots that made our nation strong, we're saying it's time again for everyone to come home to the farm."

It's not just about advertising, Schott noted. The coalition will meet with media, members of Congress, environmental groups and others to talk about farming's bright future: how U.S. farmers, using the latest technologies, will continue to expand yields and how this productivity can be a bright spot in an otherwise struggling economy.

For more information or to view the CFC ads go:
www.cornfarmerscoalition.org.

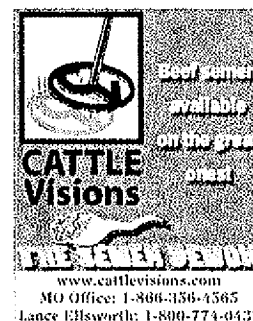
On the other side of the country, California ranchers Chet and Angela Vogt are dedicated to sharing their Three Creeks ranch with area fifth graders. This spring, the Vogt's hosted 230 students to learn about natural resources and food sources.

With support from the local Cattlewomen, Bureau of Reclamation, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife, NRCS and several other local businesses, presenters taught the students about water consumption and conservation, the plants, animals, minerals and creatures in a healthy ranch environment, as well as outdoor career opportunities. Students also learned how cattle ranching can coexist and even benefit the natural environment through conservation.

The Vogt's feel that educating is an important responsibility that should be part of every rancher's role for the future.

In the Midwest, Iowa is working to help connect visitors with farms that offer agritourism opportunities. The Visit Iowa Farms website (www.visitiowafarms.org) features detailed descriptions of Iowa farms and the events and tours that they offer for interested consumers. Categories include U-pick farms, wineries, hunting and fishing, trail riding and hiking to country stays.

Of the website, Ray Hansen, director of Iowa State University Extension's Value Added Agriculture Program, says, "Our goal is to stimulate the agritourism industry in Iowa. Having additional visitors to Iowa farms benefits local farmers, rural economies and promotes agriculture in general."



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